



User selection procedure

The facility providers, participating in Co-UDlabs, have agreed a single common User Selection Procedure (USP). This procedure will be informed by the External Evaluation Panel (EEP) consisting of independent experts from the fields covered by the research facilities of Co-UDlabs. Independent experts will not evaluate proposals in which they participate or those competing for the same facility.

The user groups (groups of researchers applying for Transnational Access) for the various research facilities in the same field will be selected if possible in a single session of the EEP, thus achieving coordinated allocation of access for the various research facilities and user groups. In the sessions of the EEP, all research facilities for which proposals are evaluated will be represented by a member of the facility provider, who will only advise the EEP on feasibility, logistics and technical issues. The EEP members will be responsible for independent evaluation of the access projects using the following selection criteria:

- Confirmation of Feasibility and Eligibility (yes/no)
- Excellence of the proposal (weak: 0 – outstanding: 10)
- Impact (weak: 0 – outstanding: 5)
- Potential for academic or industrial innovation (weak: 0 – outstanding: 5).

In the evaluation phase, in order to maximise the impact of Transnational Access and the urban drainage community building, user groups gathering members from various institutions, from different eligible countries, ideally with representation from the non-academic sector will be positively considered. If two proposals have the same rating, the number of first-time users, users that are working in countries where no equivalent research infrastructure exists and the number of female users will be considered when making the final selection (in conformity to EC objectives).

Feasibility and eligibility

Before proposals are ranked, they must meet two essential selection criteria, which are judged by facility providers: the user group must be eligible according to EU rules and the project must be practically feasible within the access period timescale. If one of these conditions is not met, the proposal will not be ranked by the EEP and is rejected.

Eligibility means that a user group must satisfy the following conditions:

- It is possible to apply from all over the world, but a user group where all or most users work in third countries (defined by EC) can only be supported as far as the cumulative access provided to them is below 20% of the total amount of days of access provided under the grant.
- The total number of researchers from the Co-UDlabs partners may not exceed 1/3 of the total number of members in any eligible user group.
- Both the user group leader and the majority of the user group members must work in a country other than the country where the facility is located.
- Only user groups that are allowed to disseminate the results they have generated under the action may benefit from the access under the grant agreement. Exceptions to this condition is foreseen when user groups contain members who work for SMEs.
- The user group members should normally not have access to a equivalent facility in their working countries.


Feasibility is defined as technical feasibility, e.g. the facility should be suitable for the proposed research project and this has to fit within the logistics of the facility provider and the access period timescale.

Evaluation and reporting

A common evaluation procedure is used to assess the scores from the selection and ranking criteria fairly and objectively. Proposals that meet the essential criteria are then judged on their scientific merit which is assessed from (i) excellence of the proposal, (ii) impact of the possible outcome of the project and (iii) potential for academic or industrial innovation. The first criterion will be rated from 0 to 10 and the second and third criteria from 0 to 5. The final score of the proposal will be the sum of the scores obtained in these three criteria. During the evaluation of the first criteria, user groups composed of members from a wide range of institutions, different eligible countries, and with the presence of non-academic sector will be positively considered. The EEP reserves the option to reject proposals that it considers to be of insufficient scientific and/or technical quality to be considered for Transnational Access. The EEP may also invite non-awarded user groups to revise and re-submit a proposal, should their proposed project be viable in a facility similar to that of their original choice and that still has available access days. The Project Administrator of Co-UDlabs will draft a summary report of the EEP-meeting containing the conclusion for each proposal evaluated, to be approved by the chair and the project coordinator of Co-UDlabs.

The user group leaders of the granted projects will be informed of the outcome and re-directed to facility providers to coordinate the access and sign the User Facility Agreement. In case of non-acceptance, the applicants will be informed by mail with a summary of the comments made by the EEP and their rank and scores. Where appropriate, the report will also include recommendations and suggestions for improvement and resubmission of a new proposal for the second call for projects scheduled for 2023. Resubmission for the second call will however not give any preference or priority in the user selection procedure.

The following Selection & Ranking and Feedback form is applied:

	Project title:	
	User group leader:	
	Research facility:	
To be completed by facility providers (before distributing this form to EEP members):		
1	User group is eligible, and project is feasible and fits within the logistics and dates of availability of the facility provider	Y/N
Remarks:		

2	Conformity with objectives of the EU	
	Representation of non-academic sector	Y/N
	Number of institutions in user group	
	Number of work countries in user group	
	Number of female users in user group	
	Number of first time ¹ users in user group	
	Remarks:	
3	The days of access required for the project are suitable	Y/N
	Remarks, suggestions to adapt the dates and/or the number of required access days, etc.	
	To be completed by EEP members:	
4	Excellence of the proposal	0-10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effectiveness of the research approach and fit to Co-UDlabs. - Quality and novelty in the field of urban drainage. - Composition and competence of the user group. 	
	Remarks:	
5	Impact of the expected results	0-5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project publication and data storage plan. - Relevance of the expected datasets and publications. 	
	Remarks:	
6	Potential for academic or industrial innovation	0-5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential end-user applications. - Further development feasibility outside the facility. 	
	Remarks:	
7	Final score (4+5+6)	0-20
8	Does the EEP consider the proposal to be of sufficient scientific and/or technical quality to be granted?	Y/N

When appropriate, this form will be sent to non-granted user groups as part of the feedback for the improvement of their proposals for the second call.

¹ New users are defined as those who have not been granted in previous Co-UDlabs Transnational access call and those who have not already had access to the requested facility beyond the scope of the project.